4 Things You Should Know About Advanced Settings in QuickBooks Online

Do you know about all of QuickBooks Online's settings? What you're missing may be important.

Looking through all the settings available in QuickBooks Online is something like reading the owner's manual when you get a new car. You know you should do it, but you find yourself consulting it only when you encounter a problem.

Whether you're new to QuickBooks Online, or you've been using it for a while, we recommend that you familiarize yourself with these important preferences. Settings do more than turn features off and on: they can teach you about tools you might not have known were available.

Let's explore some that you may have missed.

Closing the Books

You've probably heard this phrase before but do you know what it actually means in QuickBooks Online? When you set a *closing date*, you're indicating that no transactions entered prior to that date should be changed.

Click the gear icon in the upper right, then select **Your Company | Account and Settings**. Scroll down to the **Advanced** section in the left vertical toolbar. Under the first heading, **Accounting**, check the box in front of **Close the books.** Enter a date and choose one of the two options for exceptions, as pictured in the image below:

*You can **close the books** as of a specific date in QuickBooks Online so users can't change transactions entered before then.*

Warning: Talk to us before you make this decision. We can discuss the pros and cons.

Categories

QuickBooks Online offers a couple ways to categorize transactions so you can see related data in searches and reports. Scroll down to **Categories** and click on the **Off** button to the right of **Track classes** to turn this feature on. QuickBooks Online will then add a **Class** field to forms like invoices, along with a drop-down list that you can build with your own options. For example, you could create categories like departments, customer types, and product lines. You can choose to assign classes to entire transactions or to individual rows in them, and you can ask to be warned if you try to save a form without selecting a **Class**.

Track locations works similarly. You can assign a location (territory, store, department, etc.) to each transaction if you'd like.

Automation
By using QuickBooks Online for your daily accounting tasks, you're already saving time. But the site offers a way to save even more with its **Automation** tools. Here's what you can do:
- **Pre-fill forms with previously entered content**. Once you've saved a transaction for a customer, vendor, or employee, you can choose to have QuickBooks Online complete some fields in the next form you create for them.
- **Automatically apply credits**. Do you want QuickBooks Online to apply credits to the next invoice you create for a given customer? Most businesses do, but a specific example of a time you wouldn't check the box would be if you're a property manager who requires security deposits.
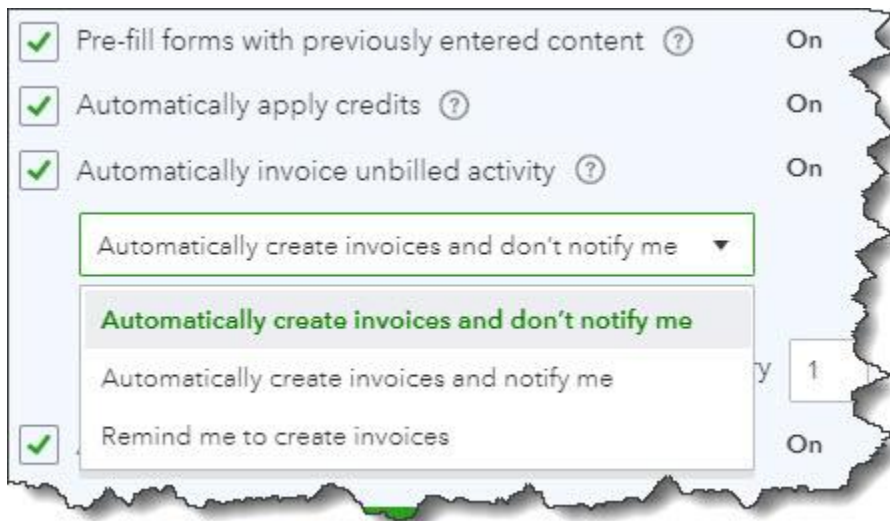
QuickBooks Online offers several automation options.

- **Automatically invoice unbilled activity**. Be careful with this one. When you have customers with unbilled activity, QuickBooks Online can automatically create invoices for them on a schedule you designate. You have a few options here. You can simply ask for a reminder as the date approaches, or you can allow the site to automatically create invoices – with or without notifying you.
- **Automatically apply bill payments.** When you record bill payments, QuickBooks Online can automatically apply them to the oldest recorded bill.

Time Tracking

Does your company sell services that are billed by the hour? If so, there are a couple of options you can turn on here. When you create timesheets or individual timed activities, you can add a **Service** field to the tracking form. You can also include a checkbox to indicate that a block of timed work is billable to customers. If you do the latter, you can opt in or out of letting users see the actual rate you're charging customers.

Checking Your Work

QuickBooks Online refers to these as **Advanced Settings** for a reason. Making the wrong choices on any of them could lead to unhappy or confused customers and/or inaccuracies in your accounting file. We think you should know about these options, but we also hope you'll schedule a consultation with us before attempting to set them up. It's always much easier to spot problems in the making than to correct mistakes already made.

Social media posts

Have you explored QuickBooks Online's **Settings**? You'll learn about things you probably didn't know the site could do for you.

If you don't know what it means to "close the books" in QuickBooks Online, ask us. We can help you decide whether it's good idea for you.

Do you need to categorize QuickBooks Online transactions by, for example, product lines or customer types? If so, you should explore the site's **Classes**.

QuickBooks Online can automate many actions to save time. We can go over these with you to see if they'd work for your business.